



April 20, 2007

Two plead guilty in extortion attempt

James G. Manning, of Cranston, and **Ricky E. Silva**, of North Providence, have pleaded guilty to federal extortion charges, admitting that, under orders from **Anthony St. Laurent, Sr.**, they went from Rhode Island to Taunton, Massachusetts to try to extort money from two men.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty pleas, which were entered during separate hearings before Chief U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi in U.S. District Court, Providence. Silva pleaded guilty on April 12 to traveling interstate to commit extortion, and Silva pleaded guilty yesterday to the same charge.

At the plea hearings, Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kenneth P. Madden and Peter F. Neronha said that the government could prove that, on April 6, 2006, St. Laurent told Manning and Silva to go to Taunton, where they would meet a man named Larry, who would lead them to the two intended extortion victims. St. Laurent said that one of the intended victims was to pay \$100,000 up front and \$2,000 a week thereafter. St. Laurent told them that, "If the guy's not going to pay nothing, you bash him."

Later that day, Manning and Silva went to Taunton, where they allegedly met with Larry Crites, who, according to an FBI affidavit, tried to lead them to one of the intended victims, thought to be at a bar in Raynham. They were unsuccessful in locating either victim.

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In July, St. Laurent pleaded guilty to directing the extortion attempt and, in January, U.S. District Court Judge William E. Smith sentenced him to 56 months in prison.

Silva is scheduled to be sentenced on July 20, and Manning on August 3. The maximum penalty for traveling interstate to commit a crime is five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Pending sentencing, Manning is free on bond, while Silva is detained.

Extortion charges are pending against Crites, of Taunton, who is free on bond.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Rhode Island State Police, and Providence Police investigated the case.

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